

(TMI Journeys - May 2017)

## TOTEM ANIMAL LANDS AT TMI

Vultures are a common sight around this part of Virginia, though it is highly unusual for them to appear on the Institute grounds. You see them spiraling on the thermals, great wings outspread, eyes downward and ever vigilant, scanning for food. As a glider pilot, Bob Monroe loved to watch them gracefully soaring far above TMI.

Indeed, vultures, also called buzzards, are some of our finest purifiers, helping to clear the environment of disease-producing decomposition. As a TMI staffer once remarked to a participant repelled by the sight of a vulture consuming something on the roadside, “The world would be a hideous place without them.”

But despite their large stature, ghoulish appearance, and intimidating reputation, vultures tend to be shy, and generally depart when humans get anywhere near them—one reason why a Black Vulture sighting during the MC<sup>2</sup> program in March was compelling.

Patty Ray Avalon, a trainer of MC<sup>2</sup>, was with David Barden, a participant from Australia, when, “We spotted a BIG elegant bird perched atop the crystal at the Nancy Penn Center. Our hearts leapt with the dream that it might be, you know, an EAGLE or a HAWK! As we got closer, our hearts calmed ... it was a common buzzard. But we had new respect for it because it was powerful and brave and singular and elegant up there.”

The bird appeared purposeful and not at all afraid. For those to whom the notion of a random universe seems absurd, this event begs several questions:

- Why did it choose TMI as its landing place, and specifically, the crystal?
- Why did it appear at just that time?
- For whom was it making its appearance?
- What was its “medicine,” its message?

Without claiming to have all the answers, I think many would agree that the vulture’s presence during the MC<sup>2</sup> program was no accident. MC<sup>2</sup>, or *Manifestation and Creation Squared*, is, in part, about bringing into form with love that which we desire, and releasing that which no longer serves us.

Could this extraordinary bird have come to assist the release of unproductive, stale energy to make room for the new? Was its perch on the crystal a statement about the resonant shift this

manifestation represents, as well as making practical use of the crystal's innate amplification capacity?

As for the "whom" questions, David and Patty Ray are certainly prime recipients! But further, David's sharing of the experience with his fellow program attendees, with TMI's team, and now with you reading this blog, widens the "whom" to all of us. So, the question for everyone becomes, *"What is the vulture's message for me?"*

A Web search will reveal a host of vulture lore present throughout cultures around the world. Reading about it can be helpful in considering what personal messages vulture brings. As Dr. Joe Gallenberger, MC<sup>2</sup>'s designer, says, "In the beautiful countryside around TMI, participants often see just the right animal totem at just the right time." All such events are an invitation to receive guidance, and sometimes guidance appears in unexpected forms.

Whether or not the above perspectives have meaning for you, this event, and the fact of your reading about it, is an exceptional opportunity to receive the gift of animal medicine.

Be open. Listen. Pay attention. Ask for signs. Hold gratitude.

Magic happens.